

IV. Remarks.

The Examiner entered the following rejections in the subject case.

1. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 6 has been cancelled.

2. Claims 1, 2, 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brooks (US 4,106,966) in view of Rosenboom et al (US 6,464,607), Noto (US 5,925,297) and Fix (US 3,656,360).

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 6. Claim 6 has been cancelled.

As to claim 1, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's conclusions. There is no incentive to combine the references. Although Noto does teach elimination of air pockets which may be trapped in a composite material, col. 2, lines 17-19, Noto also teaches that the process is preferably conducted in an airtight chamber in which vacuum has been established, col. 2, lines 19-21. This teaches away from the instant invention which concerns the evacuation of gases during cure, namely, i.e. during pressurization. The pressurized gases escape from the belt build through the non-woven region, in particular, the gases escape along the interface between the non-woven region and the mold. Venting along the noted interface prevents any low spots or pockets from forming on the non-woven region 5. This assures a proper and full engagement between the non-woven region surface and a pulley with which the belt is engaged without "low" spots in the non-woven surface that would otherwise decrease power transmission efficiency by reducing the amount of belt surface engaged with the pulley. The venting feature is accomplished without the need for additional vacuum pump (56) tubing or pipes in the molding apparatus as taught in Noto, thereby decreasing the cost of the equipment on which the method is practiced.

3. Claims 3-5 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brooks (US 4,106,966) in view of Rosenboom et al (US 6,464,607) as applied to claim 2 and further in view of Nagata et al (US 6,739,854).

Claims 3-5 depend from amended claim 1.

4. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brooks (US 4,106,966) in view of Rosenboom et al (US 6,464,607) and Fix (US 3,656,360).

As noted by the Examiner, Brooks does not teach use of a non-woven material or evacuation of gases from the mold. Rosenboom does not teach evacuating air from within a

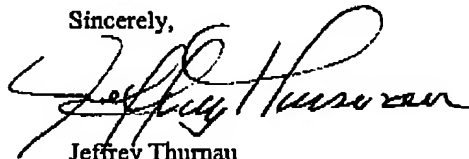
curing device. Further, Fix only teaches use of reduced pressure or vacuum tubes to remove gases, col. 2, lines 38-41. These references teach away from the instant invention which concerns the evacuation of gases during cure, namely, i.e. during pressurization. The pressurized gases escape from the belt build through the non-woven region, in particular, the gases escape along the interface between the non-woven region and the mold. Venting along the noted interface prevents any low spots or pockets from forming on the non-woven region 5. This assures a proper and full engagement between the non-woven region surface and a pulley with which the belt is engaged without "low" spots in the non-woven surface that would otherwise decrease power transmission efficiency by reducing the amount of belt surface engaged with the pulley. The vent feature is accomplished without the need for additional tubing or pipes in the molding apparatus as taught in Fix (#3 Fig. 2), thereby decreasing the cost of the equipment on which the method is practiced.

V. Fees.

Any fees payable for this amendment and IDS may be deducted from deposit account 07-0475 in the name of the Gates Corporation.

Thank you for your attention to this case. If any questions arise, please call at the number below.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Thurnau
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 42,183
303-744-4743

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